

THE AMERICAN INDIAN IN THE WORLD WAR.

It is reported that Francis Lequier, a young Chippewa, in company with two or three others, attacked a machine-gun nest, and when left as the only survivor, faced all that remained of the machine gunners and killed or captured the entire group. He was said to be recovering from 11 wounds received in action.

James M. Elson (deceased), of the Tulalip Reservation, was cited by his commanding officer for guiding sentry squads to an isolated post in No Man's Land, and for guiding patrol to outskirts of Briculles, securing information of enemy occupation, and showing exceptional skill, courage, and coolness under fire.

The superior officer of Richard Bland Breeding, a young Creek of Oklahoma, said of him: "He was the most capable, daring, and fearless platoon leader in the division."

Among those who won the croix de guerre was volunteer John Harper, a full-blood Uncompahgre Ute; of which details are lacking at this time: Chester Armstrong Fourbear, a full-blood Sioux of South Dakota, cited for bravery in swift running as a messenger at Bellicourt; Ordnance Sergt. James M. Gordon, of Wisconsin, cited for rescuing while under shell fire a second lieutenant of the French Army who was wounded while on an inspection tour; Nicholas E. Brown, a full-blood Choctaw, who when killed was a corporal in the 142d Infantry composed largely of Oklahoma Indians, the honor being posthumously awarded; Marty Beaver, a full-blood Creek, on the military records as Bob Carr, an orphan boy who enlisted in Company F, 142d Infantry, Thirty-sixth Division, details at present lacking.

Alfred G. Bailey, a Cherokee of Oklahoma, had been in regular service with Gen. Pershing in Mexico. He was a sergeant when killed in action in France and was awarded the distinguished service cross for creeping into the enemy's lines alone far in advance of his regiment where, unaided, he killed two German machine gunners and captured a third together with his gun.

Walter G. Sevalia, of Brule, Wisconsin, a corporal in Company F, Seventh Engineers, was cited for "extraordinary heroism" in action near Breuilles, France, in November, 1918. He swam the Meuse under terrific fire with a cable for a pontoon bridge, and later carried another cable over the Est Canal and across an open field covered by enemy machine guns. At this time he was wounded but returned bearing a message of great importance.

Sergt. O. W. Lender, a three-fourths blood Choctaw, was foreman of a cattle ranch in Oklahoma when we entered the war. Greatly to his chagrin an idle rumor gained currency that he was a Hun spy. He quit the cattle business at once and enlisted as proof of his American loyalty. He was cited for bravery in battle in the course of a brilliant record of which the following is a synopsis: Fought at Cantigny, May 28, 1918; fought at Soissons, Chateau-Thierry, July 18, 1918; fought in St. Mihiel salient, September 12, 1918; fought at Argonne Forest, October 1, 1918. Twice wounded and twice gassed. In addition to this military record is the interesting fact that Sergt. Lender was

selected by the French Government as the model original American soldier of whom an oil painting should be made to hang upon the walls of the French Federal building where will be displayed types of all the allied races.

Probably no more brilliant instance is recorded than that furnished by Pvt. Joseph Oklahombi, a full-blood Choctaw, of Company D, 141st Infantry, whose home is at Bismarck, Oklahoma, and who received the *croix de guerre* under the order of Marshal Petain, commander in chief of the French Armies of the east. A translation of the order follows:

Under a violent barrage, dashed to the attack of an enemy position, covering about 210 yards through barbed-wire entanglements. He rushed on machine-gun nests, capturing 171 prisoners. He stormed a strongly held position containing more than 50 machine guns, and a number of trench mortars. Turned the captured guns on the enemy, and held the position for four days, in spite of a constant barrage of large projectiles and of gas shells. Crossed No Man's Land many times to get information concerning the enemy, and to assist his wounded comrades.

Not only did the Indian boys do their full duty during the World War, but the World War had its own effect upon the Indians, as indicated in the following report from an Indian school superintendent in northern California:

In every case that I have encountered where an Indian has returned to his jurisdiction I have found that the Indian young man was greatly bettered through his work in the Army, both physically and mentally. I do not know of a single case where it has not benefited the Indian to such a degree that it is plainly noticeable and commented upon by the whites of his community. I was over at an Indian's home just the other day who had returned from active service in the trenches of France. This Indian, Phillip Jim, had the remarkable record of going over the top more than 30 times. He walked into the recruiting office at Quincy on his way home and laid down \$100 for a Victory bond, saying that he was done fighting, now he could help some other way. This Indian went straight home to farm, and started hard work of putting in a garden, repairing his fences, buildings, etc., that had gotten in bad condition since he left, for his father was afflicted with an incurable disease and his mother was ill. He says that he knows much more than he did and that he wants to do more now than he ever did.

The following report is had from an Oklahoma reservation:

One Cheyenne, typical, no-account, reservation Indian with long hair went to France, was wounded, gassed, and shell-shocked. Was returned, honorably discharged. He reported to the agency office square shouldered, level-eyed, courteous, self-reliant, and talked intelligently. A wonderful transformation, and caused by contact with the outside world. He is at work.

The character of the Indian who has served in the World War has undergone the following changes:

He has lost much of his timidity.
He has greater self-confidence.
He is more courteous and more polite.
He has been made to feel that he is as capable of fulfilling his obligations to his country as any other race of people.
He understands more fully his patriotic duty to his country.
He realizes more than ever that there is a place for him in the community; that he is a unit in the great Commonwealth.
He has seen and learned many things of educational value, and delights in telling of his experiences whether in the Army camps, or the Navy, at home, or abroad.
He has improved very perceptibly in the use of English.
His contact with the outside world and his associations with disciplined men has meant for him much mental discipline. As a result of such discipline he returns to school a better and more desirable student, and to his home a better citizen.

One young man from the Rosebud Reservation, South Dakota, who died while at camp, was brought home for burial, and an official reporting the incident says:

The boy's father's home is situated on a very high hill, so that for a long time before we reached it we could see the great crowd of Indians who had gathered to pay their last tribute. Long before we reached the home we could also see Old Glory floating from a tall flag-pole that had been set up since the news of his death had reached the reservation. Each of the five young men who were pallbearers had qualified for military service, though some had been rejected on account of physical unfitness and others had not yet been examined. Each one of them, however, had pinned to the lapel of his coat streamers of red, white, and blue, and they rode on swift Indian ponies behind the automobile which carried the body of the young soldier. Over this car floated a very large flag. In front of the procession rode another young Indian brave carrying Old Glory also. It was so impressive in its complete demonstration of loyalty that one could not keep back the tears.

The above are but a few instances of the patriotism and bravery of the (approximately) 10,000 Indian boys who were engaged in the World War.

